 № 895

An Account of the Late PROPOSALS *of the Archbiſhop of* Canterbury, *with ſome other Biſhops, to His Majeſty: In a* LETTER *to* M. B. *Eſq;*

SIR,

I Am much ſurprized at the ill Conſtructions ſome people make of the Actions of thoſe Biſhops, who have lately waited upon the King; eſpecially conſidering that moſt of Them are the very Men, who not many months ago appeared ſo publickly and ſo courageouſly, even to the hazard of all the Intereſts they had in this World, in defence of our Proteſtant Religion, and the Laws of the Land.

In order to the removing all groundleſs Jealouſies, and unreaſonable Surmiſes, in an Affair of ſo great conſequence, which our Popiſh Enemies will, I am ſure, be very ready to foment and keep up, I have here ſent you the Heads of thoſe matters which were propoſed by them to the King.

They waited upon him not as a Party ſeparate either from the Nobility or Gentry, whom they could (I believe) have wiſhed his Majeſty would rather have called for at this Juncture; or from the reſt of the Biſhops or Clergy of *England*: but as perſons whom the King was pleaſed, upon Reaſons known only to his Royal Breaſt, to command to attend upon him.

The Heads which I ſend you, are not taken from any Copy of the Paper which my Lords the Biſhops preſented to the King. I underſtand that all their Lordſhips have been extreamly careful to prevent the publiſhing of any Copies, and that they ſtill refuſe to communicate any, though they now lie under no Obligations to the contrary. However, I do aſſure you with all faithfulneſs, that theſe Heads which I am now ſending you, are true Contents obtain'd by another method, which in prudence you will imagine not fit for me to diſcloſe.

You have already been told from me, that every one of theſe Biſhops were ſent for up out of their Dioceſſes by *Expreſſes*, from his Majeſty, whom they firſt waited on in a Body, on *Friday* the 28th of *September*. I cannot upon the ſtricteſt inquiry, find that any thing paſſed betwixt the King and Them, at that firſt attendance upon him, beſides general Expreſſions of Favour and Protection from his

Majeſty, and general returns of Duty and Loyalty from the Biſhops. This was matter of admiration to us all here, who could not believe but that the King had other Intentions of a nearer, and more particular concern, when he firſt reſolved to ſend ſo far for ſome of theſe Biſhops: but theſe Alterations in Councils are things not fit for you or I to meddle with.

However, my Lords the Biſhops were not ſatisfied herewith, concluding (as I ſuppoſe) that his Majeſty would not have ſent for them ſo far if he had not intended to have adviſed with them in this Juncture, and to give them the liberty of offering him ſuch Counſels as they thought neceſſary at this time: and therefore when his Grace my Lord Archbiſhop of *Canterbury* waited on the King alone the firſt time, on *Sunday*-morning *Sept.* 30th. being indiſpoſed when the other Biſhops attended on *Friday*, their Lordſhips did, by my Lord of *Canterbury*, intimate their thoughts about that Affair, and their readineſs to the King; who was pleaſed not only to permit them to give him the beſt and moſt particular Advices, but to encourage them to do it with all the freedom that was neceſſary for the preſent occaſion.

Upon this Royal Invitation their Lordſhips aſſembled together next day at my Lord of *Canterbury*'s Palace, and prepared, upon the moſt mature deliberation, ſuch Matters as they judged neceſſary for his Majeſty's knowledge and conſideration: and on the *Wedneſday* after waited on the King in a Body, when his Grace in his own, and in the name of the reſt of the Biſhops then preſent, did in a moſt excellent Speech, repreſent to his Majeſty ſuch things as were thought by them abſolutely neceſſary to the Settlement of the Nation, amidſt the preſent Diſtractions, and to the publick Intereſt of Church and State.

I am aſſured that his Grace deliver'd himſelf upon this Critical Occaſion, as with all dutifulneſs to his Majeſty, ſo with all the readineſs and the courage that did become ſuch an Apoſtolical Archbiſhop as God hath bleſt our *Church of England* with at this time.

You muſt not expect here his excellent Words, but an Abridgment of them, according to my Talent, in a meaner ſtile.

I. *Firſt, the Biſhops thought fit to repreſent in general to his Majeſty, That it was neceſſary for Him to reſtore all things to the ſtate in which He found them when He came to the Crown, by committing all Offices and Places of Truſt in the Government, to ſuch of the Nobility and Gentry*

try, as were qualified for them, according to the Laws of this Kingdom; and by Redreſſing and Removing ſuch Grievances as were generally complain'd of.

II. Particularly, *That his Majeſty would Diſſolve the Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſion, and promiſe to his People never to Erect any ſuch Court for the future.*

III. *That He would not only put an effectual ſtop to the iſſuing forth of any Diſpenſations, but would Call in, and Cancel all thoſe which had ſince his coming to the Crown been obtained from Him.*

IV. *That he would Reſtore the Univerſities to their Legal State, and to their Statutes and Cuſtoms, and would particularly Reſtore the Maſter of* Magdalen Colledge *in* Cambridge, *to the Profits of his Maſterſhip, which he hath been ſo long Deprived off, by an illegal Suſpenſion; and the Ejected Preſident and Fellows of* Magdalen Colledge *in* Oxford, *to their Properties in that Colledge: And that He would not permit any Perſons to enjoy any of the Preferments in either Univerſity, but ſuch as are qualified by the Statutes of the Univerſities, the particular Statutes of their ſeveral Foundations, and the Laws of the Land.*

V. *That He would ſuppreſs the Jeſuits Schools opened in this City, or elſewhere, and grant no more Licenſes for ſuch Schools as are apparently againſt the Laws of this Nation, and his Majeſty's True Intereſt.*

VI. *That He would ſend Inhibitions after thoſe Four* Romiſh Biſhops *who under the Title of* Apoſtolick Vicars, *did preſume to Exerciſe within this Kingdom ſuch Juriſdictions as are by the Laws of the Land Inveſted in the Biſhops of the* Church of England, *and ought not to be Violated or Attempted by them.*

VII. *That He would ſuffer no more* Quo Warranto's *to be iſſued out againſt any Corporations, but would reſtore to thoſe Corporations which had been already diſturbed; their ancient Charters, Priviledges, Grants, and Immunities, and Condemn all thoſe late illegal Regulations of Corporations, by putting them into their late Flouriſhing Condition, and Legal Eſtabliſhment.*

VIII. *That He would fill up all the Vacant Biſhopricks in* England, *and* Ireland, *with Perſons duly qualified according to the Laws: and would eſpecially take into His Conſideration the* See *of* York, *whoſe want of an Archbiſhop is very prejudicial to that whole Province.*

IX. *That He would Act no more upon a* Diſpenſing Power, *nor inſiſt upon it; but permit that Affair at the firſt Seſſion of a Parliament to be fairly Stated and Debated, and Setled by Act of Parliament.*

X. *That*

X. *That upon the Reſtoration of Corporations to their Ancient Charters, and Burroughs to their Preſcriptive Rights, He would Order Writs to be iſſued out for a fair and free Parliament, and ſuffer them to Sit to Redreſs all Grievances, to Settle Matters in Church and State upon juſt and Solid Foundations, and to Eſtabliſh a due* Liberty of Conſcience.

XI. Laſtly, and above all, *That His Majeſty would permit ſome of His Biſhops, to lay ſuch Motives and Arguments before him, as might by the Bleſſing of* GOD, *bring back His Majeſty unto the Communion of our Holy Church of* England, *into whoſe Catholick Faith He had been Baptized, in which He had been Educated, and to which it was their earneſt and daily Prayer to Almighty* GOD, *that His Majeſty might be Re-united.*

All theſe Counſels were Concluded with a Prayer to GOD, in whoſe Hands the Hearts of Kings are, for a good Effect upon them; eſpecially the laſt, about bringing the King back to the Proteſtant Religion.

And now, Sir, I cannot but ask you, What grounds there are for any Mens Jealouſies of the Biſhops Proceedings? Pray ſhew this Letter to all your Friends, that ſome may lay down their Fears, and others may have this Antidote againſt taking any up. I do aſſure you, and I am certain, I have the beſt grounds in the World for my aſſurance, That the Biſhops will never ſtir one Jot from their PETITION; but that they will, whenever that happy Opportunity ſhall offer it ſelf, let the Proteſtant Diſſenters find that they will be better than their Word given in their Famous PETITION.

In the mean time let You and I, Commend the Prudence of theſe Excellent Biſhops, Admire their Courage, and Celebrate their juſt Praiſes, and never forget to offer up moſt fervent Thanks to GOD, for his Adorning the *Church of England*, at this Juncture, with ſuch Eminent Apoſtolical Biſhops.

I am with all Reſpect Yours,

N. N.